



**LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
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Joel D. Boyd, Ed.D.  
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February 8, 2021

Governor Charlie Baker  
Massachusetts State House  
24 Beacon Street  
Office of the Governor, Room 280  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker,

On behalf of Lowell Public Schools, I write to respectfully request that school employees in urban districts be prioritized to receive COVID-19 vaccinations.

The availability of the vaccine for educators is a critical component for districts to operate at the fullest possible strength as our Nation begins to emerge from this global pandemic. With the constrained availability of vaccines across the Nation, we believe it's important to prioritize vaccinations for educators who are working in urban communities which have - in many cases - been hit hardest by COVID-19 in Massachusetts and serve the vast majority of the Commonwealth's economically disadvantaged students. In Lowell Public Schools, of the more than 14,000 students we serve, 63.3% are identified as economically disadvantaged and 76.9% are identified as high needs.

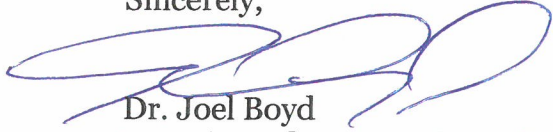
The Center for Disease Control's guidance on vaccine distribution focuses on "Preservation of Societal Functions" under which healthcare personnel, frontline essential workers, and other essential workers were identified for Phase 1 of the Commonwealth's vaccination plan. Access to public education and access to school facilities is also clearly a societal function. The American Academy of Pediatrics, which has often been cited by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, has strongly advocated for students to return to an in-person learning model, and school employees have been included in Phase 1 of the vaccine rollout in other states.

With educators currently included in the broader group of individuals who are classified in the third tier of Phase 2 of vaccine distribution in Massachusetts and the overall limited supply of vaccines across the Commonwealth, it remains unclear when the vaccine will reach any school employees who have not been

defined as first responders. Given the increased societal need for in-person, face-to-face instruction in communities with large populations of high needs students, I respectfully request that educators in urban districts be prioritized for vaccine distribution within Phase 2 and be vaccinated without delay so that they can perform their duties more safely and securely.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Dr. Joel Boyd  
Superintendent, Lowell Public Schools

CC. State Delegation: Edward Kennedy, Thomas A. Golden, Rady Mom and Vanna Howard  
Eileen Donoghue, City Manager  
Lowell City Council Members: Mayor John J. Leahy, William Samaras, Sokhary Chau, David Conway, John Drinkwater, Rodney M. Elliott, Rita Mercier, Vesna Nuon and Daniel Rourke  
Lowell Board of Health: Lisa Golden, William J. Galvin III, MD and Erin Gendron